

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is requested.

Claims 1 and 3-20 remain in the application. Claim 1 has been amended to define the invention more clearly and in view of very helpful comments offered by the Examiner in the Advisory Action of January 22, 2007. Additionally, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations that had been in claim 2. Accordingly, claim 2 has been canceled. New dependent claims 19 and 20 have been added. These new claims correspond to the embodiment of the invention depicted in FIGS. 4A and 4B. The terminology employed in new claims 19 and 20 has support in paragraphs 0047-0050.

Counsel noted a few very minor clerical mistakes in paragraph 0048 while reviewing the application to determine the support for new claims 19 and 20. Accordingly, paragraph 0048 has been amended. The Examiner will appreciate that these minor amendments merely ensure that paragraph 0048 conforms to paragraph 0049 and 0050 and to the numeric references employed in FIGS. 4A and 4B.

The applicants and the assignee are very pleased to note that the Examiner has allowed claims 4, 6, 9, 17 and 18. Those claims remain in the application and have not been amended further.

Claims 1-3 and 5 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) in view of published U.S. Patent Appl. No. 2003/006388 A1 to Sahlin et al. Claim 1 also was rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,594,819 to Narendran et al. Claims 7, 8 and 10-16 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Narendran et al. considered in view of secondary references.

Counsel filed a Request for Reconsideration on December 29, 2006 with detailed arguments regarding deficiencies that were perceived by counsel to exist in the references applied in the final rejection. Those detailed arguments are reiterated herein but with respect to the amended claims. However, the Examiner's very helpful comments in the Advisory Action imply that the arguments in the Request for Reconsideration may be unnecessary and that the amended claims are likely to distinguish patentably over the applied art.

The Examiner's comments in the Advisory Action focused on the phrase "wherein the base member is configured for being attached to the attachment member while the base member is holding the optical fiber" as appearing in claim 1 prior to this Amendment. The Examiner commented that she could not infer from previously presented claim 1 "that the base member has to transition from a disattached state to an attached state while holding the optical fiber." The Examiner asserted persuasively that the Sahlin et al. reference discloses the base member being configured for being attached to the attachment member while the base member is holding the optical fiber because the Sahlin et al. reference discloses the base member being in a state of being attached while holding the optical fiber cable. The Examiner concluded that the phrase "for being attached" does not necessarily imply a process or action, but can also imply a state of attachment.

In view of the very helpful comments of the Examiner, claim 1 has been amended to define the base member as being "configured for being attachable to the attachment member while the base member is holding the optical fiber cable." It is believed that this part of amended claim 1 focuses squarely on the Examiner's very clear comments in the Advisory Action and more clearly defines the base member as "being

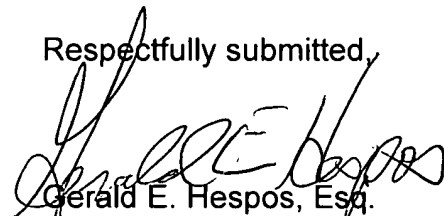
attachable to the attachment member while the base member is holding the optical fiber cable. As explained very clearly in the Request for Reconsideration, the Sahlin et al. reference does not permit the clearly claimed attachability while the base member is holding the optical fiber cable.

The Narendran et al. reference was applied to claim 1 as existing prior to this Amendment and as part of an obviousness rejection to dependent claims 7-16. Narendran et al. was not applied to claim 2.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 2. Accordingly, amended claim 1 is patentable over Narendran et al. considered alone or in combination with any of the secondary references.

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, it is submitted that all of the claims remaining in the application are directed to patentable subject matter and allowance is solicited. The Examiner is urged to contact applicants attorney at the number below to expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



Gerald E. Hespos, Esq.

Atty. Reg. No. 30,066

Customer No. 001218

CASELLA & HESPOS LLP

274 Madison Avenue - Suite 1703

New York, NY 10016

Tel. (212) 725-2450

Fax (212) 725-2452

Date: February 21, 2007